

Matthew 7:15-20

Application Questions

1. As Jesus concludes the Sermon on the Mount, He warns His disciples about false prophets. Paul, Peter, John and Jude also warn the church about false prophets and teachers. (See Acts 20:28-32, 1 Timothy 4:1-5, 2 Peter 2:1-3, 1 John 4:1 and Jude 4.) Why do you think these warnings are so important as we near the end of the age?
2. Jesus says that these false prophets are dressed in sheep's clothing, but inside they are ravenous wolves. The Greek word that is translated "ravenous" means *violently greedy*. What do you think motivates them to pursue Christians? Why do they disguise themselves?
3. In verses 16-20, Jesus tells us that the only way we can recognize false prophets is by their fruits. If we think of fruit as that which proceeds from a person's life and work, what kind of bad fruit do false prophets produce? What kind of good fruit can we expect from a true prophet or teacher?
4. Have you ever known a church leader whose life hasn't lived up to their profession? Does this mean he or she is a false prophet or teacher? What is our obligation to such a person? At what point do we mark a person as causing divisions (Romans 16:17-18)? Has a church you've attended ever done this? What was the outcome?
5. What false teaching do you think is most prevalent today? What could you say to someone who caught up and captivated by this?